Molly Mouse Steals the Rubber Popper
By Yu May

Once upon a time, there was a little church mouse girl named Molly. She had big round ears, a long pink tail, and a white furry body. She lived with her parents in a cozy little mouse hole in the church's wall. Her mother was a pretty gray mouse with a white belly and her father was a tall, dark brown mouse with a long tail.

Every day, Molly would run around the church, playing hide and seek with her friends and exploring new places. One day, she snuck into the church pantry and found a cereal box with a picture of a children's toy on the front: a rubber popper!

Molly couldn't believe her luck. She had always wanted one of those rubber poppers, but her parents had never bought her one. As she stared at the box, she felt the temptation building inside her.

She knew that stealing was wrong. She had heard her parents talk about it before. But the toy was right there in front of her. And she wanted it so badly.

Molly hesitated for a moment, thinking about the possible consequences. She knew that if she got caught, she would be in trouble. Her parents might give her a spanking or take away her favorite toys.

But then she thought about the popper again. She imagined herself playing with it, snapping it back and forth and laughing. She knew that it would be so much fun.

Molly made up her mind. There was no way her parents would ever know. She climbed up onto the shelf and dug into the cereal box. Her paws found the popper, and she pulled it out, grinning from ear to ear.

The toy was just as wonderful as she had imagined. She turned it inside out and placed it on the ground. It snapped into the air, making a satisfying popping sound. Molly laughed and played with it, forgetting about everything else.

But as she played, a nagging feeling crept into her mind. She knew that what she had done was wrong. She knew that she had disobeyed her parents and taken something that didn't belong to her.

But the snap of the popper drove the thought from her mind. Molly tucked the forbidden treasure into her dress and rushed home, with a confused mix of glee and sadness in the pit of her stomach.
…

Later that day, her father noticed something on her whiskers and asked her, "Molly, what's that on your face? It looks like crumbs?"

Molly replied, "It’s nothing, papa. It's just some dust."

Her mother noticed a strange lump in the back of Molly’s dress. She tucked her hand down the back of Molly’s blouse and pulled out the rubber popper. "Well, well, well. What do we have here? Molly, did you take this toy from the pantry?"

Molly looked down, feeling guilty, and nodded her head. Her parents were disappointed in her and reminded her of the ten commandments.

"Thou shalt not steal. You know, Molly, it's not right to take things that don't belong to you," her father said.

"We need to teach you a lesson so you'll remember not to steal again," Molly's mother added.

Molly's parents knew that punishing their daughter was necessary to teach her an important lesson. Her mother sat down on a small wooden stool, and Molly climbed onto her lap. Her father stood behind them, his tail at the ready.

"Molly, stealing is wrong, and it's important that you understand that. We're going to give you a spanking so that you can remember this and never do it again," her father said sternly.

Molly felt her heart sink as Mom lifted her skirt and pulled down her bloomers. She knew what was coming, but she didn't know how bad it would be. Her mother took her paws and held them tightly.

"Are you ready, Molly?" her father asked.

Molly nodded, her eyes brimming with tears. She felt the cool air on her bottom as her father raised his tail and brought it down hard on her backside.

Thwack!

Molly yelped in pain as the first blow landed. She could feel the sting radiating through her little body. She tried to squirm away, but her mother held her firmly in place.

Her father delivered another firm blow, and Molly cried out again, tears streaming down her face. She knew that she deserved the punishment, but it still hurt.

Thwick! Crack!

Her father continued to spank her, each blow landing harder than the last. Molly could feel the heat building on her bottom, and she knew that it was turning red.

"I'm sorry, Mama and Papa. I won't do it again," she cried out between sobs.

Her parents continued to spank her, making sure that she understood the severity of her actions. Molly could feel the punishment taking its toll on her. She felt guilty, ashamed, and in pain.

Whack! Wha-thwack! Smack!

Her father continued to deliver the punishment until Molly's cries turned into whimpers. She knew that she had been naughty, and she knew that she deserved the spanking. But it didn't make it hurt any less. Finally her father paused the tail whipping. "Molly, in addition to stealing, you also lied to me. Because of that, you are going to get a second punishment."

Raising one of her paws from Molly's back, Mama pointed to the stolen rubber popper they had left at the table with a knowing look.

Papa picked it up and examined it curiously, then looked at Mama with a nod and a smile. Molly thought they looked like they were agreeing to something without saying a word.

"Since we can't return the toy, we'll use it as a way to punish you," Mama said. "Bend over the arm of the sofa, Molly."

Molly did as she was told, and Papa took the rubber popper and turned it inside out. He then carefully placed it over Molly's bottom. It was big enough to cover her entire left

cheek, and it made a vacuum that held it tight in place. Molly tensed up, not sure what to expect.

And then, with a snap, the popper clapped against Molly's bottom and flew into the air.

Molly squeaked in surprise. It didn't hurt as much as Papa's tail, but then again, it covered a much larger area. Mama and Papa looked at each other and smiled, pleased with their clever idea.

"Ten times, I think," Papa said, picking up the popper and handing it to Mama.

Molly braced herself as Mama placed the popper over her right cheek. Each time it snapped against her bottom, Molly squealed and cried. Mama and Papa alternated the popper between her left and right cheeks again, and again, and again. By the tenth time, she was crying in earnest, tears streaming down her face.

But when it was over, Molly felt a strange sense of relief as she sat on her wooden stool in timeout. She knew that what she had done was wrong, and she deserved to be punished. The rubber popper had once seemed so wonderful to her. Now, when she looked back at it, and at her red bottom, she couldn't believe she had ever wanted it badly enough to steal it.

Mama examined the rubber popper appreciatively. "We'll have to leave the congregation a note of explanation and a nickel to pay for the popper immediately. But I think I'll keep this in the cupboard, next to my wooden spoons and papa's cane. Molly, the Bible says a thief must pay back twice the cost of what they have stolen. Your pocket money from chores will pay for this popper. You may not play with it until you've paid the church a whole dime."

Molly hung her head and unsuccessfully tried to rub the sting from her bottom. A dime was a two whole weeks of her pocket money, and she had a sinking feeling that if she was naughty, Mama had a different use in mind for the rubber popper.

"We hope you learned your lesson, Molly," Papa said sternly. "Stealing is never okay, no matter how small the thing you take may seem."

Molly nodded, still sniffling. She knew that she had done something wrong, and that it was important to make things right. She promised herself that she would never steal again.

Finally, Molly was allowed out of timeout. Her parents hugged her tightly, trying to comfort her.

"We love you, Molly. We just want you to learn from your mistake," her mother said.

Molly nodded, feeling both relieved and ashamed. She knew that what she did was wrong, and she was determined to make it right.

Afterward, they tucked her into bed and told her to reflect on what she had done. She prayed to Jesus for forgiveness and promised herself that she would never steal again, before drifting off to sleep.

The next day at church, the Reverend told the story of the thief on the cross who was forgiven by Jesus, and Molly knew that even though she had stolen the toy, that she was forgiven too.

"Thank you, Mama and Papa, for helping me learn my lesson. I promise I won't steal again."

Her parents smiled at her and said, "We love you, Molly. Always remember that."

The End